

A Day at the LBJ: Jobs, Trips, Advice, Bases and Visitors

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President Johnson announced yesterday that he is removing Teodoro Moscoso as co-ordinator of the Alliance for Progress and is assigning responsibility for Administering the Latin American economic aid program to Thomas C. Mann, the newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.

The President earlier had indicated a strong desire to place all Latin-American affairs in the hands of one man, and this latest move will complete the process. He has already named Mr. Mann as a special White House assistant in order to give him extraordinary powers to run the job.

The change was announced yesterday afternoon at an outdoor sparerib barbecue for newsmen held on the banks of the Pedernales River at the LBJ Ranch.

At the same time, the President also disclosed that he is going to California Feb. 21-22 to meet for two days with Mexican President Adolfo Lopez Mateos and to receive an honorary degree from the University of California at Los Angeles.

He announced that Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has set up a new review board that will investigate the possibility of closing down other obsolete military bases and warned that such closings will be effected when possible, with savings to be used for new social legislation.

He also disclosed that Federal employment was reduced "by more than 1,000 during November," but reaffirmed his insistence on making even deeper personnel cuts. An executive order to that effect went out earlier this week. With the Alliance for Progress as well as Latin-American diplomatic affairs now under his jurisdiction, Mr. Mann exercises more authority in hemispheric affairs than any single American official ever has before.

Since his appointment as special assistant to the President, speculation has been that he would take over Mr. Moscoso's duties, too.

Despite a hopeful start at the beginning of the Kennedy administration, the alliance has floundered in recent months. Some Latin-American countries have not been able to spend the U. S. aid funds allotted them. Others have found it psychologically or politically impossible to institute the land and social reforms that were required to qualify for the program.

As a result of all this, Mr. Moscoso has faced some recent criticism for not being "tough enough" in administering the program.

He will become a special adviser, with the rank of ambassador, to Mr. Mann, and will be U. S. representative to the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress and also U. S. representative to the meetings of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council of the Pan American Union.

Mr. Johnson said Mr. Mann's first order of business will be "to explore all the possibilities for increased efficiency as well as operating economies which may be obtained through the exercise of his combined responsibilities. . . ."

Mr. Johnson told reporters that a discussion of East-West relations will be "the most important part" of his two-day talks with West German Chancellor Ludwig Erhard.

Dr. Erhard is scheduled to arrive at 10 a. m. today at Bergstrom Air Force Base where he will be met by the President and flown by helicopter to the ranch.

There, with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and German Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder, the two leaders will talk over U. S.-German military and economic relations.

Mr. Rusk, present at the press conference, said the U. S. looks upon West Germany as "one of the staunchest members of NATO and of the Atlantic community" and predicted that Mr. Johnson and Dr. Erhard "will move onto fresh chapters in our relations."

Mr. Johnson, speaking into a portable microphone that was placed on two bales of hay, said he had dispatched Central Intelligence Agency director John McCone to brief former President Eisenhower on the state of the new budget, on progress being made in Federal personnel reductions, on economic conditions expected in 1964 and on "general intelligence developments from throughout the world."

He said his decision to have Mr. McCone, a Republican, do this "means that the President of the United States is going to keep ex-Presidents of the United States fully informed and seek their advice and counsel from time to time."

He said Mr. McCone would also report the steps he has taken to act on advice given him by Gen. Eisenhower just after the assassination of President Kennedy. "Gen. Eisenhower has spent a good deal of time working with me," he said, but did not elaborate.

He added that he also has sought advice from former Presidents Truman and Hoover and is in the process of study the old Hoover Commission's recommendations on government reorganization.

In announcing the creation of the Defense Department board to study defense installations, he pointed out that a slower version of such an investigation has been going on since 1961.

The new board will be headed by Thomas D. Morris, Assistant Defense Secretary for Installations and Logistics, and will have as members his counterparts from the three military departments.

Its purpose will be to "identify additional unnecessary installations which should be reduced or closed during the next several years."

Mr. Johnson told reporters that he feels it always will be natural for Congress to show alarm over any base closings because they lead to local economic changes, but added that Congress was "very reasonable and very prudent" when faced with the recent announcement that 26 U. S. bases at home were being shut down. He said he had never known a member of Congress consciously to be in favor of a bad thing; it was just that opinions differ.

In any event, he said, everyone "must understand that we are going to be reviewing the situation from time to time" because "we want to save every penny we can in military expenditures." He added: "We think it is much better to curtail spending money on unneeded armaments and educate your children."

He said that recent letters received by his office indicate support of the action by a ratio of almost 3 to 1.